

# Minutes

Talbot County Board of Elections  
215 Bay Street  
Easton, MD 21601  
October 20, 2021

## Attendance

### Board Members Present

Joseph Secrist, President	(R)
Walter Black	(D)
Richard Bulman	(R)
Wadella Thomas *	(R)
Susan MacKinnon *	(D)

### Staff

Jeri Cook, Election Director

### Board Attorney

Lyndsey Ryan

### Public

None

\* Via video conferencing

The monthly meeting of the Talbot County Board of Elections was held October 20, 2021 in Conference Room # One at the Board office indicated above. Mr. Secrist called the meeting to order at 9:37 a.m. Mr. Secrist noted that a quorum was present.

## Approval of Minutes

Mr. Secrist asked if the Board had any corrections or additions to the minutes of the meetings of September 15, 2021 and October 6, 2021, copies of which had been forwarded to the Board Members in advance of the meeting. Mr. Bulman moved approval of the minutes as presented. Mr. Black seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## Addition/Changes to the Agenda

Mr. Secrist asked that Acting Director and Advertisement for Director Vacancy be added under New Business to the agenda as published. Black moved approval of the agenda with these additions. Mr. Bulman seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

## **Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

## **Election Director's Report**

Ms. Cook provided a written report of the activities of the staff prior to the meeting. A copy of that report is attached. She elaborated on her written report that all polling place agreements for the upcoming Primary and Gubernatorial Elections were received with the exception of those with the Board of Education.

Ms. Cook previously advised the Board that she will be retiring at the end of November. She advised the Board that she has leave in various categories that she must use or lose if not taken before she retires. She will be on leave after today through her retirement date, with the exception of two days, although she can be available if needed. The Board then discussed the need to consider personnel matters arising from Ms. Cook's leave plans and retirement. Mr. Bulman moved that the agenda for this meeting be amended to include under closed session personnel matters related to Ms. Cook's leave and pending retirement. Ms. Thomas seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Board Members then discussed the importance of action by the Board of Education to approve the polling place agreements. The Board had previously considered supporting legislation to require public schools in Talbot County to be closed, as is required in most other counties in Maryland. Mr. Bulman moved that the Board request our State Delegates and Senator to introduce legislation requiring public schools in Talbot County be closed on Election Days, that the Board Attorney draft appropriate legislation and the Board President meet with our Delegates and Senator to request their support for this legislation. Ms. MacKinnon seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

## **Board Attorney's Report**

Ms. Ryan reported that she is pleased to be back following her maternity leave. She had no other issues to report on at this time.

## **Old Business**

### **a. Facility for Election Office**

Mark Cahoon of the county staff provided Ms. Cook a schematic diagram of tentative space for the Board of Elections in a building previously occupied by Cadmus Printing. It would meet the space need previously requested of the county by Ms. Cook.

b. Budget FY2022

Ms. Cook previously provided reports on expenditures recorded by the county through August.

c. Review of Invoices

Ms. Cook previously provided Board Members with copies of invoices received since the last meeting. There were no questions from Board Members.

d. County Bulletins

Ms. Cook previously provided copies of County Bulletins. There were no questions from Board Members.

**New Business**

a. Establishing Election Director's new job description

Mr. Secrist previously provided Board Members with a copy of the Position Description (Form MS 22) for the Election Director in Caroline County, along with a blank Form MS 22 for development of a Position Description for the Election Director in Talbot County. Ms. Cook previously provided a list of tasks she developed for use by the Board in preparing a Position Description for the next Election Director. Ms. Cook also provided a Department of Budget and Management position requirements document for the Election Director I job. Following discussion of how to proceed with so much new information, it was the sense of Board Members to have a Special Meeting to prepare the Position Description. After consulting all Board Members regarding their availability, it was the sense of the Board that the President call a Special Meeting at 9:30 a.m. on November 2, 2021 to develop and approve the Director's job description.

b. Acting Director

Mr. Secrist asked the Board Members for suggestions on ways to identify Acting Director candidates to manage the office following Ms. Cook's retirement until a new Director is hired. Ms. Ryan was asked to inquire as to possible candidates available for temporary service from other local governments, State Board of Elections and temporary staffing agencies.

c. Advertisement for Director Vacancy

Mr. Secrist reported that an advertisement was placed in the local newspaper and will also appear in other editions of the local paper in Maryland. The State Board will advertise it within the agency and through other state personnel postings.

### **Confirmation of next meeting**

Mr. Secrist noted that the next meetings of the Board of Elections will be a Special Meeting at 9:30 a.m. on November 2, 2021 and the regularly scheduled meeting at 9:30 a.m. on November 17, 2021

### **Closed Session**

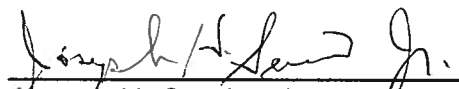
Mr. Black moved that the Board go into closed session for the purpose of discussing personnel matters that affect one or more specific individuals as permitted under General Provisions Art. 3-305(b) (1). Ms. Thomas seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. Whereupon the Board went into closed session at 11:18 a.m. Present at this session were Board Members Mr. Secrist, Mr. Black, Ms. Thomas, Ms. MacKinnon and Mr. Bulman. Election Director Jeri Cook and Board Attorney Lyndsey Ryan were also present.

At 11:43 a.m. the Board returned to open session. President Secrist reported that the Board discussed specifics regarding the personnel issues but took no action. The Board also approved the minutes of the Closed Meeting of October 6, 2021.

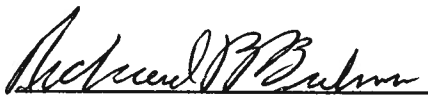
### **Adjournment**

Mr. Black moved adjournment of the meeting. Mr. Bulman seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Attested,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph H. Secrist, Jr., President

Respectfully submitted,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Richard B. Bulman, Secretary

#### October 2021

- We received full support from the Republican Central Committee for closure of the schools.
- Kelly Griffith responded that it will be on the November agenda.
  - I spoke with Dr. Griffith on Tuesday, October 12 and informed me that she is attempting, along with the other superintendents to get a change in COMAR to allow for virtual learning capability for dates when schools are closed for other events, ie. Election day.
- Received signed polling place agreement from Oxford Firehouse.

**PRESIDING OFFICER'S WRITTEN STATEMENT FOR CLOSING A MEETING ("CLOSING STATEMENT")  
UNDER THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT (General Provisions Article § 3-305)**

**This form has two sides. Complete items 1 – 4 before closing the meeting.**

- 1. Recorded vote to close the meeting:** Date: November 2, 2021; Time: 11:37 AM;  
Location: Conference Room 1, 215 Bay Street, Easton, MD. 21601;  
Motion to close meeting made by: Walter Black; Seconded by Wadella Thomas;  
Members in favor: Black, Bulman, Thomas, Secrist, MacKinnon; Opposed: None; Abstaining:  
None; Absent: None.

- 2. Statutory authority to close session (check all provisions that apply).  
This meeting will be closed under General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b) only:**

(1) X "To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals"; (2)\_\_\_ "To protect the privacy or reputation of individuals concerning a matter not related to public business"; (3)\_\_\_ "To consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto"; (4)\_\_\_ "To consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State"; (5)\_\_\_ "To consider the investment of public funds"; (6)\_\_\_ "To consider the marketing of public securities"; (7)\_\_\_ "To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice"; (8)\_\_\_ "To consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation"; (9)\_\_\_ "To conduct collective bargaining negotiations or consider matters that relate to the negotiations"; (10)\_\_\_ "To discuss public security, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to the public or to public security, including: (i) the deployment of fire and police services and staff; and (ii) the development and implementation of emergency plans"; (11)\_\_\_ "To prepare, administer, or grade a scholastic, licensing, or qualifying examination"; (12)\_\_\_ "To conduct or discuss an investigative proceeding on actual or possible criminal conduct"; (13)\_\_\_ "To comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter"; (14)\_\_\_ "Before a contract is awarded or bids are opened, to discuss a matter directly related to a negotiating strategy or the contents of a bid or proposal, if public discussion or disclosure would adversely impact the ability of the public body to participate in the competitive bidding or proposal process." (15)\_\_\_ "To discuss cybersecurity, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to: (i) security assessments or deployments relating to information resources technology; (ii) network security information . . . or (iii) deployments or implementation of security personnel, critical infrastructure, or security devices."

**Continued →**

3. For each provision checked above, disclosure of the topic to be discussed and the public body's reason for discussing that topic in closed session.

Citation (insert # from above)	Topic	Reason for closed-session discussion of topic
§3-305(b) (1)	Select Candidates	Discussion of applications for Election Director position
§3-305(b) (1)	Employee Appeal	Update Board on date for appeal before DBM
§3-305(b) ( )		
§3-305(b) ( )		
§3-305(b) ( )		

4. This statement is made by Joseph Secrist, Presiding Officer.

*Joseph Secrist*

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**WORKSHEET FOR OPTIONAL USE IN CLOSED SESSION: INFORMATION FOR SUMMARY TO BE DISCLOSED IN THE MINUTES OF THE NEXT OPEN MEETING. (See also template for summary.)**

- For a meeting closed under the statutory authority cited above:

Time of closed session: \_\_\_\_\_

Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Members who voted to meet in closed session: \_\_\_\_\_

Persons attending closed session: \_\_\_\_\_

Authority under § 3-305 for the closed session: \_\_\_\_\_

Topics actually discussed: \_\_\_\_\_

Actions taken: \_\_\_\_\_

Each recorded vote: \_\_\_\_\_

- For a meeting recessed to perform an administrative function (§ 3-104): Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Persons present: \_\_\_\_\_

Subjects discussed: \_\_\_\_\_